IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend paragraph **[0001]** as follows:

**[0001]** This application is a divisional of application Serial No. 10/391,267, filed March 18, 2003, ~~pending.~~ now U.S. Patent 6,885,108, issued April 26, 2005.

Please amend paragraph **[0004]** as follows:

**[0004]** One approach that has been taken to reduce the amount of area, or "real estate," consumed by semiconductor devices has been to reduce the amount of packaging that is required therefor. Thus, so-called "chip-scale packages" ("CSPs"), which typically comprise semiconductor device packages with lateral (*i.e.*, x-axis and y-axis) dimensions that are not much larger than, or are substantially the same size as, the corresponding lateral dimensions of the semiconductor dice thereof have been developed. In order to fabricate a semiconductor device package with such small dimensions, a minimal amount of protective, encapsulant material is typically used. Thus, the protective, encapsulant material may cover only the active surface of the semiconductor die. Additionally, a CSP may include a thin layer of protective, encapsulant material that covers the backside of the semiconductor die.

Please amend paragraph **[0033]** as follows:

**[0033]** If protective layer 20 is formed from a B-stage material, it may be partially cured or cross-linked, such as by exposing the same to an elevated temperature (*e.g.*, about 100° C.) if it is heat-curable (*i.e.*, a thermoset resin) or exposing the material to an intensity of ultraviolet (UV) radiation for a duration that will result in only partial curing if the material is UV-curable. It is currently preferred that the curing or cross-linking of the B-stage material be effected to a degree which will facilitate cutting of the same (*e.g.*, with a ~~diamond-coated~~ diamond-coated blade of a wafer saw) but will allow the material to continue to flow or be able to flow (*e.g.*, by application of pressure, heat, solvent, etc. thereto) somewhat before being fully cured or cross-linked. Alternatively, solvent may be at least partially driven from a solution which includes a polymer dispersed within a solvent.

Please amend paragraph **[0036]** as follows:

**[0036]** Referring now to FIG. 4, when a B-stage material is employed as the material from which protective layer 20 is formed, delaminated areas 24 (FIG. 3) may be self-healed (*i.e.*, automatically readhere to upper or active surface 13 of semiconductor device component 12) since the material from which protective layer 20 is formed is only partially cured. Likewise, any cracks 25 (FIG. 3) that were formed in protective layer 20 during the cutting, severing, or dicing process may self-heal. Such self-healing may be effected by the presence of solvent in the material ~~along.~~ alone. Optionally, heat and/or additional solvent may be applied to the B-stage material to reduce the viscosity thereof and thereby facilitate self-healing. As another option, additional force, such as a gentle positive pressure, may be applied to the material of protective layer 20 to facilitate self-healing of any delaminated areas 24 thereof or cracks 25 therein. Such healing may occur or be effected prior to or concurrently with the curing or further hardening of the material of protective layer 20.

Please amend paragraph **[0040]** as follows:

**[0040]** Alternatively, self-healing and curing or hardening may be effected substantially simultaneously. For example, if protective layer 20 comprises a ~~thermally curable~~ thermally curable B-stage material, healing may be effected as the B-stage material is heated to a sufficient temperature to further cure, or cross-link, the same. As another example, some B-staged UV-curable polymers may be further cured with heat, which may also reduce the viscosity thereof to facilitate healing as such materials are being cured.

Please amend paragraph **[0060]** as follows:

**[0060]** Optionally, once preformed protective layer 20′ has been positioned on upper or active surfaces 13 of semiconductor device components 12, it may be permitted or caused to spread, such as over portions thereof which are shadowed by conductive structures 18. When preformed protective layer 20′ is formed from a partially cured B-stage material, such spreading may occur by allowing preformed protective layer 20′ to sit for a period of time prior to further curing the same. Alternatively, force may be applied thereto, such as positive air pressure, the ~~B-~~

~~stage~~ B-stage material may be heated, the B-stage material may be exposed to a solvent, or a combination of the foregoing may be effected to facilitate spreading of the B-stage material. If preformed protective layer 20′ comprises a thermoplastic material, it may be caused to spread, for example, by the nonspecific or focused application of heat.

Please amend paragraph **[0061]** as follows:

**[0061]** Referring now to FIG. 10, preformed protective layer 20′ is depicted as being secured to upper or active surfaces 13 of a plurality of semiconductor device components 12. Preformed protective layer 20′ may be secured to upper or active surfaces 13 by way of a suitable adhesive material (*e.g.*, a ~~thermally-curable~~ thermally curable or UV-curable adhesive material) (not shown), which will withstand the operational temperatures of semiconductor device component 12 or any other electronic componentry to be positioned near preformed protective layer 20′. Such an adhesive material may be applied to one or both of upper or active surfaces 13 and a corresponding surface 27′ of preformed protective layer 20′ by any suitable method known in the art (*e.g.*, by spraying, spreading, rolling, etc.).